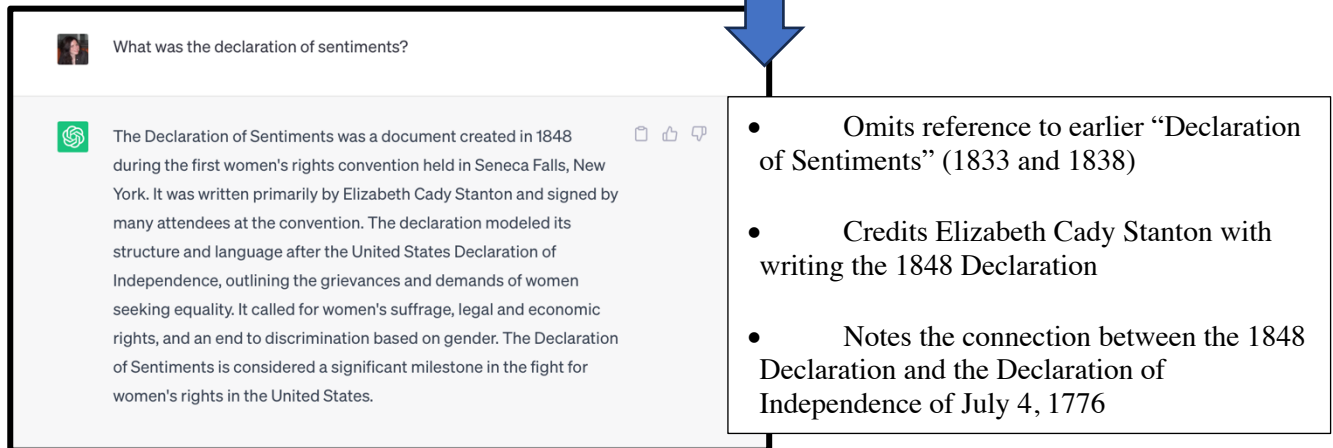


## The Declarations of Sentiments and Belligerent Non-Resistance Hope Elizabeth May

**Objective:** To give a brief history of the three Declarations of Sentiments (1833, 1838, 1848) and to discuss "belligerent non-resistance" as a unifying theme.

### 1. CHAT GPT ON THE DECLARATIONS OF SENTIMENTS:



What was the declaration of sentiments?

The Declaration of Sentiments was a document created in 1848 during the first women's rights convention held in Seneca Falls, New York. It was written primarily by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and signed by many attendees at the convention. The declaration modeled its structure and language after the United States Declaration of Independence, outlining the grievances and demands of women seeking equality. It called for women's suffrage, legal and economic rights, and an end to discrimination based on gender. The Declaration of Sentiments is considered a significant milestone in the fight for women's rights in the United States.

- Omits reference to earlier "Declaration of Sentiments" (1833 and 1838)
- Credits Elizabeth Cady Stanton with writing the 1848 Declaration
- Notes the connection between the 1848 Declaration and the Declaration of Independence of July 4, 1776

- Like most narratives of Seneca Falls/The Declaration of Sentiments, CHATGPT minimizes the non-violent thread in the 1848 Declaration.
- Also important is the participation of men in the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, including James Mott (Lucretia Mott's husband). See booklet, p. 21, for signatories.

### 2. THREE DECLARATIONS OF SENTIMENTS (SEE BOOKLET)

- 1833 Declaration of Sentiments of the American Anti-Slavery Society
- 1838 Declaration of Sentiments of the New England Non-Resistance
- 1848 Declaration of Sentiments of The Seneca Falls Women's Rights

### 3. THE 1833 DECLARATION (ANTI-SLAVERY)

- The End? Abolition of Slavery. The Means? The "spiritual weapon" of Truth

p.2 in booklet "[Our principles] forbid the doing of evil that good may come, and lead us to reject, and to entreat the oppressed to reject, the use of all carnal weapons for deliverance from bondage; relying solely upon those which are spiritual."

- Women were present but were not allowed to sign the 1833 Declaration
  - Lucretia Mott and the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society (1833)
    - Other regional female anti-slavery societies followed (Boston).
    - The Salem female anti-slavery society (1832/4) was an organization of free black women
  - The Women's Anti Slavery Conventions: 1837-1839
    - Non-violence & The Right *and Duty* of Petition

### 4. THE 1838 DECLARATION (PEACE)

- 1838: Re-committing to Non-Violence in the face of violence (Elijah Lovejoy (Nov. 1837); Pennsylvania Hall (May 1838)
- New England Non-Resistant Society (September 1838, several months after the burning of Pennsylvania Hall in May 1838)
- Maria Weston Chapman, Hannah L. Stickney, Lucretia Mott (booklet, p. 15)
  - Pacifism is radical – rejecting even defensive violence

## 5. BELLIGERENT NON-RESISTANCE AND THE SPIRITUAL WEAPON OF TRUTH

**Quote #1:** *Not until men's minds are hot in the furnace, that they yield to the weight of evidence, and argument; and we must not wonder that the blows of these appointed instruments bring out sparkles of fiery indignation.* (Report of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society, 1836, p. 84)

**Quote # 2:** *"I fear that we have not faith enough in moral warfare. We must plead for Peace earnestly, and depend upon the moral weapons of truth to help us in the great work"* (Lucretia Mott, Proceedings of a Peace Meeting Held in Boston, Dec 23d 1870)

**Quote #3:** *Robert Purvis has said that I was "the most belligerent Non-Resistant he ever saw." I accept the character he gives me; and I glory in it. I have no idea, because I am a Non-Resistant, of submitting tamely to injustice inflicted either on me or on the slave. I will oppose it with all the moral powers with which I am endowed. I am no advocate of passivity. Quakerism, as I understand it, does not mean quietism. The early Friends were agitators; disturbers of the peace; and were more obnoxious in their days to charges which are now so freely made than we are.* (Lucretia Mott, National Anti Slavery Standard, 3. Nov. 1860)

**Quote #4:** *The term Satyagraha was coined by me ... to distinguish it from the movement then going on in the United Kingdom and South Africa under the name of Passive Resistance. Its root meaning is holding on to truth, hence Truth-force. I have also called it Love-force or Soul-force. In the application of Satyagraha, I discovered in the earliest stages that pursuit of truth did not admit of violence being inflicted on one's opponent but he must be weaned from error by patience and sympathy. For what appears to be truth to the one may appear to be error to the other. And patience means self suffering. So the doctrine came to mean vindication of Truth not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but on one's self.* (Gandhi, *The Voice of Truth*, p. 148).

## 6. RE-FRAMING THE 1848 DECLARATION OF SENECA FALLS (p. 14 and 20 in booklet)

### 1838 DECLARATION

.. we shall employ lecturers, circulate tracts and publications, form societies, and petition our State and national governments, in relation to the subject of UNIVERSAL PEACE.

**In entering upon the great work before us**, we are not unmindful that, in its prosecution, we may be called to test our sincerity, even as in a fiery ordeal. It may subject us to insult, outrage, suffering, yea, even death itself. **We anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation,** calumny.

### 1848 DECLARATION

**In entering upon the great work before us**, **we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation,** and ridicule; but we shall use every instrumentality within our power to effect our object. We shall employ agents, circulate tracts, petition the State and national Legislatures, and endeavor to enlist the pulpit and the press in our behalf. We hope this Convention will be followed by a series of Conventions, embracing every part of the country.

**Question #1:** Are only non-violent means sanctioned by the 1848 Declaration?

**Question #2:** What is the difference between a "suffragette" and a "suffragist"?

**Question #3:** While Gandhi (quote 4, above) stresses "Holding on to truth" by "infliction of suffering on one's self", the 1833 (Anti-Slavery) and 1838 (Non-Resistance) Declarations stress that the means to be used in the pursuit of the respective aims are "the power of love" and "the foolishness of preaching". Are Gandhi and the framers of those Declarations talking about the same thing, i.e. "soul force" or "love force"?

*The best reason for women's suffrage is that politics can only develop into a state worthy of our progressing civilization if the essentially female qualities of gentleness and dignity would penetrate political life. It seems to me that the violent methods presently adopted are most unsuitable because they lack the above mentioned qualities. Means should never be less noble, less beautiful than the end.* (Bertha von Suttner, 1911)